

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9761

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 7401

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, RP

SUBJECT: PROMINENT U.S. CLERIC VISITS PHILIPPINES

1. ON MAY 16, REVEREND FLAVIAN DOUGHERTY, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR OF PASSIONIST FATHERS, (U.S. EASTERN PROVINCE) VISITED EMBASSY. DOHERTY IS ON INSPECTION TRIP OF HIS ORDER'S MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES IN MINDANAO. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY BISHOP REGINALD ARLISS OF MARBEL AND LOCAL PASSIONIST SUPERIOR REVEREND EDWARD DEVINY. ALL ARE AMCITS. DOUGHERTY SAID HIS COLLEAGUES IN MINDANAO HAD ASKED HIM TO CALL AT EMBASSY AND EMPHASIZE THAT THEY WERE COUNTING ON USG SUPPORT SHOULD THEY ENCOUNTER PROBLEMS WITH GOP.

2. DOUGHERTY REPORTED PANAMIN WAS CONTINUING TO HARRASS MISSIONARIES IN MINDANAO. HE CITED SPECIFICALLY FATHER REX MANSMAN OF SANTA CRUZ MISSION. EMBOFF NOTED THAT PANAMIN HAD BEEN GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL NON-MUSLIM MINORITY PEOPLES. HE OPINED THAT IT WAS INEVITABLE THAT PANAMIN WOULD TRY TO UNDERCUT ONGOING CHURCH EFFORT IN ORDER TO BOOST ITS OWN STOCK. THIS EVEN MORE THE CASE GIVEN IDIOSYNCRATIC NATURE OF MANDA ELIZALDE WHO PRESIDENT MARCOS SEEMS UNWILLING TO DROP DESPITE PROBLEMS HE HAD CAUSED FOR HIM WITH CHURCH.

3. EMBOFF BRIEFLY REVIEWED A STATE OF CHURCH-STATE

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RELATIONS AND USG EFFORTS TO BE HELPFUL WHEN PRIESTS OR EVEN FORMER PREISTS RAN INTO TROUBLE. EMBOFF CITED CASES OF FATHERS REUTER AND DENIS MURPHY. EMBOFF INDICATED WE WERE AWARE OF IMPRESSION AMONG SOME ACTIVIST CLERICS THAT EMBASSY LESS SOLICITOUS OF THEIR NEEDS THAN THOSE OF U.S. BUSINESSMEN, BUT ATTRIBUTED THIS TO THESE CLERICS' SUSPICIONS OF MOST INSTITUTIONS, CHURCH HIERARCHY,

AS WELL AS USG AND EMBASSY. BISHOP ARLISS SUPPORTED THIS OBSERVATION. EMBOFF ALSO POINTED OUT THAT AS RESULT OF OUR COLONIAL PRESENCE CERTAIN MISSIONARIES HAD EXAGGERATED EXPECTATIONS OF WHAT USG COULD DO FOR THEM WHEN

THEY RAN INTO TROUBLE WITH REGIME. EMBOFF SAID SOVEREIGN STATE STILL FINAL JUDGE OF WHAT FOREIGNERS COULD REMAIN OR NOT BUT ADDED AS PRACTICAL MATTER GOP UNLIKELY TO TAKE HASTY ACTIONS WHICH MIGHT CAUSE IT MAJOR PROBLEMS WITH ORDERS WHICH HAVE POLITICAL CLOUT IN U.S.

4. FATHER DOUGHERTY SAID HE WAS REASSURED BY HIS CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFFS PROMISED REPORT TO WASHINGTON. DOUGHERTY REITERATED THAT ALL OF HIS MISSIONARY COLLEAGUES WERE SOLID CITIZENS WHO WERE DOING A GOOD JOB, NOT ONLY FOR U.S., BUT FOR THE PHILIPPINES. EMBOFF REPLIED THEY HAD VISITED AREAS WHERE AMERICAN MISSIONARIES OPERATED AND SHARED THIS VIEW.

5. FATHER DOUGHERTY LEAVES FOR UNITED STATES THIS EVENING (MAY 16). ON HIS RETURN HOME HE PLANS CONSULT WITH OTHER MISSIONARY ORDERS WHOSE PRIESTS ARE WORKING IN THE PHILIPPINES. AS A RESULT OF RESPONSE TO LETTERS OF MARYKNOLL BISHOP REGAN OF TAGUM, HE ANTICIPATED HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WOULD DO MORE TO MAKE KNOWN IN U.S. PROBLEMS MISSIONAIRES IN PHILIPPINES FACE. EMBOFF SUGGESTED HE MIGHT WISH TOUCH BASE IN DEPARTMENT AND GAVE HIM NAME OF PHILIPPINE COUNTRY DIRECTOR. DOUGHERTY CONFIDENTIAL

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ALSO PLANS MEET WITH FATHER HEHIR OF CATHOLIC CONFERENCE WHO RECENTLY VISITED (SEE MANILA 5877).

6. COMMENT: DOUGHERTY, WHO HAS BEEN PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR FOR ALMOST EIGHT YEARS, SEEMED GUINELY REASSURED BY HIS DISCUSSIONS AT THE EMBASSY. SHOULD HE CONTACT DEPARTMENT, SUGGEST HE BE BRIEFED ON USG'S CONTINUING INTEREST IN AND EFFORTS FOR U.S. MISSIONARIES WORKING IN THE PHILIPPINES. STULL

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